

Message Text

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WHITE HOUSE- GEN. SCOWCROFT

S/S - MR. LUERS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 231306

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT FORD'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SIAD

FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF CONVERSATIONS AT WHITE HOUSE
OCTOBER 11 BETWEEN PRESIDENT FORD AND PRESIDENT SIAD.
PRINCIPAL SUBJECTS WERE SOUTHERN AFRICA, MIDDLE EAST,
SOMALI-ETHIOPIA RELATIONS, AND INTERNAL SOMALI AFFAIRS.

1. PRESIDENT SIAD, SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF OAU IN HIS
CAPACITY AS OAU PRESIDENT, CITED CONTINUED DECOLONIZATION
AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST RACISM IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AS
MAJOR CURRENT CONCERNS OF ALL INDEPENDENT BLACK AFRICAN
STATES. HE SAID US SUPPORT WAS NEEDED. HE CITED THE BYRD
AMENDMENT AS INCONSISTENT WITH THE IMPORTANT ASSISTANCE
THE US HAD PROVIDED TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES. PRESIDENT FORD
SAID HIS ADMINISTRATION AND HE PERSONALLY WERE OPPOSED TO
THE AMENDMENT. ALTHOUGH THE VOTE WOULD BE A CLOSE ONE,
IT WAS HIS JUDGMENT THAT THE HOUSE WOULD FOLLOW THE SENATE'S
EXAMPLE IN VOTING REPEAL BEFORE ADJOURNMENT IN DECEMBER.

2. THE SECOND MAJOR ISSUE PRESIDENT SIAD WISHED TO RAISE
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WAS THE MIDDLE EAST. WHILE RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTION

US DIPLOMACY HAD MADE TOWARD PEACE IN THE AREA, SIAD BELIEVED ISRAELI RIGIDITY WAS BLOCKING A SOLUTION OF THE PALESTINE PROBLEM, WITHOUT WHICH NO LASTING SOLUTION TO THE

AREA'S PROBLEMS WOULD BE POSSIBLE. PRESIDENT FORD SAID THE US WAS COMMITTED TO THE PRESERVATION OF ISRAEL BUT WE AGREED FLEXIBILITY WAS NEEDED. HE HOPED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER'S CURRENT CONVERSATIONS WITH MIDDLE EAST LEADERS WOULD PRODUCE MOVEMENT TOWARD A SOLUTION.

3. CONCERNING SOMALI-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS, SIAD SAID HE HAD BEEN IN COMMUNICATION WITH THE EMPEROR OVER A TWO-YEAR PERIOD AND HAD THOUGHT THEY WERE ON THE POINT OF MOVING TOWARD FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE OGADEN PROBLEM. THEN THE EMPEROR SEEMED TO CHANGE HIS MIND. NONETHELESS SOMALIA WOULD NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ETHIOPIA'S PRESENT INSTABILITY. SOMALIA HATED WAR AND WOULD NOT BE THE CAUSE OF WAR.

4. WITH REGARD TO INTERNAL SOMALI AFFAIRS AND SOMALI ATTITUDES ON OTHER MATTERS, SIAD STRESSED SOMALIA'S INDEPENDENCE FROM FOREIGN INFLUENCE. HE PRAISED SOVIET ASSISTANCE, BUT SAID IT WAS DISINTERESTED, HAD NO STRINGS ATTACHED, AND WAS RESPECTFUL OF SOMALI SENSITIVITIES. SOMALIA WAS NON-ALIGNED. HE REFERRED LIGHTLY TO THE "FOREIGN BASES" ISSUE, IMPLYING THAT THE CHARGE WAS BASED ON INACCURATE REPORTS AND REPEATING THAT SOMALIA'S INDEPENDENCE WAS NOT FOR SALE. HE SAID REPORTS OF SOMALI "ANTI-AMERICANISM" WERE UNJUST. HOW COULD A POOR COUNTRY LIKE SOMALIA, HE ASKED, AFFORD THE LUXURY OF MAKING ENEMIES OF BIG POWERS? HE REGRETTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN OCCASIONAL "CONFUSIONS" IN SOMALI-US RELATIONS IN THE PAST. PRESIDENT FORD SAID HE HOPED WE COULD MAKE PROGRESS IN ELIMINATING SUCH PROBLEMS BETWEEN US. PRESIDENT SIAD SAID ETHIOPIA USED TO BE CONSIDERED THE SOMALI PEOPLE'S FIRST ENEMY. SIAD SAID THIS WAS NO LONGER THE CASE. HE STRESSED THAT SOMALIS'S ENEMIES WERE NOT RPT NOT ETHIOPIA BUT RATHER POVERTY, SICKNESS AND IGNORANCE. PRESIDENT FORD SAID THE US WANTED TO BE AS HELPFUL AS IT COULD, WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF WHAT WAS POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE, IN RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEMS OF

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DEVELOPMENT IN COUNTRIES LIKE SOMALIA. INGERSOLL

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